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ABSTRACT

This document summarizes a catalogue report of major Minnesota proposals issued over the past two years (through the end of the 1985 legislative session) for improving the quality of K-12 public education in the State. The document provides an overview of the themes and highlights from the proposals, following the topical order used in the catalogue. Topic areas include: curriculum, pedagogy, student testing, reform of the teaching profession, and establishment of school-business partnerships. Three different types of reform measures are discussed in a section giving an account of legislation passed in the Education Finance Omnibus Bill during the June 1985 special session; these measures are: "access to excellence" legislation, student learning and testing legislation, and legislation relating to the teaching profession. Also included are a bibliography from the full report, presenting complete citations for all the reform proposals; and an appendix, providing information about the 18 different organizations and other sources of the reform proposals. These sources are categorized and briefly described; their addresses and phone numbers are supplied. (ETS)

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MINNESOTA K-12 EDUCATION:
A CATALOGUE OF REFORM PROPOSALS
a summary version

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THE FUTURE OF K-12 PUBLIC EDUCATION IN MINNESOTA

A project sponsored by the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs and the College of Education University of Minnesota

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MINNESOTA K-12 EDUCATION:
A CATALOGUE OF REFORM PROPOSALS

a summary version

by

Lawrence C. Wells

A Report of the CURA/College of Education Project on
The Future of K-12 Public Education in Minnesota

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Edited by Judith H. Weir

FOREWORD

This report grows out of the Project on the Future of K-12 Public Education in Minnesota sponsored jointly by CURA and the College of Education at the University of Minnesota. The project, begun in the summer of 1983, has been designed to develop an accurate and comprehensive assessment of K-12 public education in Minnesota, to examine the debate surrounding public education, especially its applicability to Minnesota, and to analyze the various reform proposals as they might apply to Minnesota.

The central component of the project is the University of Minnesota Panel on the Future of Public Education in Minnesota, comprised of faculty members from various disciplines throughout the University with expertise and interest in public education. This faculty panel has guided the development of the project and reviewed its reports and publications.

This report summarizes the catalogue report we have published of the major educational reform proposals suggested in Minnesota during the past two years. The full report, Minnesota K-12 Education: A Catalogue of Reform Proposals, is available free-of-charge from CURA. The catalogue is the fifth of a number of publications growing out of the joint CURA/College of Education project. Four earlier reports have been published by CURA: The Berman, Weiler Study of Minnesota Student Performance: A Critical Review (September 1984), Minnesota Citizen Attitudes Towards Public Education (March 1985), Minnesota K-12 Education: The Current Debate, the Present Condition (April 1985), and 1985 Minnesota Citizen Opinions on Public Education and Educational Policies (December 1985).

* * * * *

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INTRODUCTION

During the past two years, many reform proposals have been issued by a variety of Minnesota organizations. The proposals grow out of the activities of specially commissioned panels, educational and administrative groups, business-related groups, and the legislature. The purpose of the full catalogue is to summarize, in useful categories, the major Minnesota proposals for improving the quality of education. Proposals issued up through the end of the 1985 legislative session are included. This full report is not an analysis of reform proposals but only an exposition and classification of them in a format useful for easy reference.

This summary version of the catalogue includes an overview of the proposals and a legislative update which provides a picture of educational reform as enacted by the state legislature and connects some of the themes contained in the proposals with actual legislation passed during the 1985 special legislative session. No attempt is made to connect pieces of legislation with specific reform proposals.*

The complete catalogue version of this report presents the reform proposals under specific subject areas (such as curriculum, pedagogy, and student testing).

This summary also includes the bibliography from the full report (which presents complete citations for all the reform proposals) and the appendix (which provides information about the eighteen different organizations and sources of the reform proposals). The sources are ordered into five groups and a brief description is given of each source, followed by their address and phone number for anyone interested in obtaining further information.

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*For a detailed analysis of Minnesota educational reform issues and programs addressed in the 1983 and 1985 legislative sessions see Joyce Krupey, Improving Education: The Minnesota Approach (1985).

A SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR MINNESOTA PROPOSALS

One-hundred and eight-five proposals from eighteen different sources are contained in this catalogue. This summary provides an overview of the themes and highlights from the proposals and follows the topical order used in the catalogue.

Reaffirm and Expand the Basic Curriculum

There appears to be little dispute over what should constitute the core curriculum. The Governor's Commission on Education for Economic Growth (1984) and the Minnesota Business Partnership (Berman, Weiler Associates 1984) emphasize math, science, language arts (communication), and social studies. The Minnesota Alliance for Science (1984) stresses the importance of math and science beyond the level of minimum requirements. The Minnesota Business Partnership goes further and wants to deregulate state mandated course requirements at the secondary level while guaranteeing free electives for secondary students to be taken in their school or elsewhere. Minnesota Wellspring (1985), while recommending that core subjects be required for all students in high school, also wants to give local school districts a choice of which requirements are emphasized. The Governor's Commission, on the other hand, recommends focused and specific requirements at both the elementary and secondary levels. The Minnesota Council on Quality Education (1985) stresses student communication proficiency through a comprehensive communication curriculum, and wants to see improvement in students' higher level thinking, decision-making, and leadership skills. The Minnesota Education Association (1984) states that preschool education should be available to all who want it and community education should be delivered as part of the public school system. Finally, the Governor's Commission and a DFL group (Senator Pehler et al. 1985) want to increase funding for educating the gifted and talented.

Modify Pedagogy

Pedagogy refers to how the curriculum is taught, including teaching methods, use of time and space, and the application of technology. The reform proposals reflect two areas of interest.

The first and most prominent area is creating a learner outcome and mastery-based model for education in which specific knowledge and skills are delineated that students are expected to attain (learner outcome) and students are then assessed in their progress toward attaining these goals (mastery). Spearheading the drive for a system based upon measurable learner outcomes has been Commissioner Ruth Randall and the Minnesota

Department of Education. Learner outcomes are focused upon in order to set high expectations, emphasize productivity and performance, provide maximum flexibility for teaching and learning styles, and provide strong standards within which all those concerned may work to restructure education (Minnesota Department of Education 1983). The Minnesota Business Partnership, the Council on Quality Education, and the governor's Policy Development Program (Minnesota Executive Branch Policy Development Program 1984) also discuss this issue.

The second area is using new technology in the schools. The Public School Incentives plan (1983) mentions examples of using new technology while the Minnesota Education Association emphasizes technology as a teaching tool but not as a replacement for teachers and teaching. Minnesota Wellspring advocates establishing regional technology centers.

Test Students

There is some general agreement on the subject of testing. That is, there is general agreement that there should be school testing programs but no agreement as to what they should be, who should direct them, or what should be done with the results. State standardized tests measuring mastery in core areas are favored by several groups or individuals, including the Governor's Commission, the Minnesota Business Partnership, Governor Perpich (1985), the State Senate's "Access to Excellence" bill (Senator Nelson, et al. 1985) and the DFL group. However, the Minnesota Education Association does not favor such a state standardized test but instead asks for locally constructed testing programs for diagnostic use and curriculum improvement. The DFL group's plan permits local districts to add to the state test in order to evaluate local curriculum.

The test results would be used in several different ways--for example, to provide a statewide data base and to see how students, schools, districts, and the state measure against others (Governor's Commission); to publish the aggregated test scores by school (Governor Perpich and the Minnesota Business Partnership); and to measure the strength of a district's programs by aggregated results (the DFL group and the State Senate bill). The Governor's Commission also wants to institute a statewide graduation qualifying test.

Upgrade the Teaching Profession

Nearly forty-five percent of the proposals have to do with reforming the teaching profession. For convenience, the proposals have been arranged in ten subcategories, recognizing that some proposals may not neatly fit into the subcategory in which they are placed and may comfortably fit into more than one subcategory.

Approaches to teacher recruitment are addressed in several proposals. One approach is to make the teaching profession more attractive through better working conditions and increased rewards (specific salary issues are addressed in a later subcategory). The Minnesota Higher Education Coordinating Board (1985) and the Minnesota High Technology Council (1985) make proposals along this line.

Another approach is to provide financial help to would-be teachers. The Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (1984) wants to support talented students with scholarships and with specific funds dedicated to helping minority students prepare for teaching. Loan forgiveness is suggested by the same group and supported as well by Minnesota Wellspring and the High Technology Council. Loan forgiveness could be used, in their view, as a way of encouraging people to train for areas in which there are teacher shortages, such as math and science teachers for jobs in outstate Minnesota. However, the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) recommends that the state not establish special financial aid programs to recruit students to teaching. They see such programs as an ineffective way to attract potential students.

Teacher preparation is a subcategory rich in proposals. The Governor's Commission and the High Technology Council propose that entrance requirements be upgraded and increased, while the HECB wants teacher education programs to admit students to the upper division professional sequence only after they have demonstrated competencies in verbal communication and mathematical reasoning. Teacher education curriculum is the focus of proposals by the HECB, who want to see a special task force created to recommend curricular changes and perhaps the inclusion of specific legislatively mandated courses; the Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (1984) wants to see a balanced curriculum maintained which includes a quality liberal arts component, while the High Technology Council proposes that coursework and graduation requirements for math and science teachers be increased. The Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (MACTE) would like the state to allocate research and development monies for the study of programs that will improve teacher education and for funds to support the continuing professional development of teachers. In addition, the MACTE wants teacher preparation institutions to continually monitor the basic academic skills of their students.

A number of proposals fall under the general classification of teacher evaluation. One issue, which has achieved national attention and has been addressed in many states, is that of teacher competency testing. Three Minnesota proposals address the issue of testing the teachers. The Governor's Commission favors a test of general knowledge and skills at the end of the teacher training program, while the DFL group wants teachers

themselves to develop a test to be taken in the subject area of licensure. The HECB favors criterion-referenced tests of subject knowledge in one's teaching field, plus the requirement that beginning teachers demonstrate competency in the classroom in order to qualify for a continuing license.

Besides the issue of testing, the HECB proposes developing specific outcomes and outcome measures to be used in the evaluation of individual programs. The Minnesota Education Association (MEA) sets forth a number of criteria to be used for teacher evaluation, while the MACTE wants to see the evaluation of teacher candidates continue through the present institutional and program approval procedures. The MACTE also favors creation of a task force to review, assess, and make recommendations concerning current tests and other measures of teacher knowledge and skills as well as more research to identify teacher effectiveness. The Governor's Commission wants a general upgrading of the evaluation process by involving a wide-ranging committee to interact regularly with the teaching staff.

In the area of teacher licensure there are proposals both general and specific. The Governor's Commission suggests an upgrading of recertification standards while the DFL group directs the Board of Teaching to review its current rules on certification and licensure renewal. The HECB favors the development of personal professional development plans to link school priorities to licensure renewal while retaining flexibility for teachers. The Minnesota Business Partnership restructures present licensure and preparation for teaching in order to enable teachers to implement the Partnership's mastery learning approaches. Finally, the MEA offers several specific recommendations linking licensure with various other factors, such as a student screening process and changing school districts.

A controversial issue that has achieved attention from a number of states is the topic of alternative licensure for those entering the teaching profession from other fields. The MACTE follows a cautious path in recommending that efforts to license teachers outside the present approval process be discouraged until research findings point to adequate alternate procedures. On the other hand, the HECB wants to see at least one pilot program in teacher education for graduates who have proven talents in other careers. The High Technology Council favors a short-term certification program for those already holding degrees in math and science. The Governor's Commission goes futher and recommends alternative licensure through an internship program for non-education graduates. The DFL group would like to see community members with a particular expertise share it with students in the classroom. Public School Incentives questions the quality of traditional teacher education programs and recommends exploring alternate paths into teaching.

Teacher development, including both in-service training and continuing education, is an area much focused upon in the proposals. The Council on Quality Education favors comprehensive staff development which would improve instructional effectiveness, and the DFL group wants local districts to develop their own plans for staff development. Governor Perpich and the State Senate bill follow this tack in giving each district the flexibility and funding to determine its own programs. In terms of development in specific curricular areas, the Alliance for Science wants to assist teachers in the instruction of elementary and secondary science and math, the Governor's Commission favors in-service training for elementary school science teachers, and the High Technology Council proposes a continuing education program for K-12 science teachers. Finally, the areas of teacher mentorship and collegial coaching are addressed by the HECB, MEA, and the Council on Quality Education.

Yet another area in the teaching profession that has elicited visible reform efforts in several states is that of differentiated career paths. In the Minnesota debate, proposals range from favoring career ladder programs (the DFL group and Governor's Commission) to those favoring a more extensive reorganization of the teaching profession within the schools (Minnesota Business Partnership) to those supporting options for teachers outside the traditional school setting as well as within the classroom (Public School Incentives).

Closely associated with the issue of career paths is that of teacher salary. Even though no specific dollar figures are mentioned, there appears to be some concensus that salary increases are in order in view of added responsibilities (Business Partnership), in order to attract and retain talented persons (MACTE), and to increase teacher morale (Governor's Commission). In addition, the High Technology Council favors increasing the average starting salary for math and science teachers 10 to 20 percent in order to be competitive with the private sector. Although the issue of salary is not discussed in the Minnesota Education Association's 1984 report, the MEA subsequently asked for a 50 percent increase in the starting salary for teachers.

A variety of proposals having to do with contractual issues are grouped together and include several proposals from the MEA on topics such as teacher preparation time, the Public Employment Labor Relations Act, and statewide bargaining. Other proposals call for written job descriptions for teachers (Governor's Commission) and the modification of teacher seniority laws so that program needs are taken into account in determining the order in which teachers are laid off or rehired (Business Partnership).

One final subcategory looks to the near future in which there are projected teacher shortages. The Alliance for Science offers a number of specific steps that should be taken to address the coming shortage of teachers in the areas of math and science. The

Business Partnership recommends the establishment of a student loan assumption program and a teacher salary bonus program to help meet teacher shortages in critical subject or geographic areas.

Reform Administrative and Support Staff

In contrast with the volume of proposals dealing with the teaching profession and institutional arrangements, materials on administrative and support staff are miniscule.

Several proposals try to assure that school district and administrative personnel are adaptable to change. The Minnesota Business Partnership proposes to remove tenure from administrative positions in order to give districts more flexibility in assigning personnel. The governor's Policy Development Program advocates training administrators in the process and procedures of planning for change, and the DFL group proposes a regionally-based program to provide assistance to school district management in the use of technology. The Governor's Commission recommends additional training opportunities for administrators on the proper discharge of teaching staff.

Beyond these proposals the Minnesota Education Assocation has several things to say about the process of teacher evaluations and about the use of school support personnel. They suggest, for example, that all non-instructional duties should be performed by persons other than the teacher. The Governor's Commission is also in favor of the use of paraprofessionals and volunteers to assist teachers.

Assist Underserved Populations

There are a few proposals that deal with special needs of unserved or underserved students. The Council on Quality Education has several specific suggestions in its recommendation to eliminate the achievement gap by addressing the needs of underserved students, especially minorities and rural learners. The Governor's Commission recommends assistance for three types of underserved students: those with learning difficulties, those handicapped or disabled, and those gifted and talented. In addition, the DFL group proposes an increase in funding for gifted students.

Improve School Environment

The Governor's Commission and the Minnesota Education Association each have proposals designed to upgrade the overall school environment. The Governor's Commission suggests that each school develop a "code of conduct" which would clearly define certain expectations in different areas such as student attendance and homework.

The MEA has some specific expectations regarding school facilities; for example, that they be safe from environmental hazards and have access for the handicapped.

Class size is an issue in two proposals. The Governor's Commission wants grades K-3 not to exceed twenty students per teacher, while the MEA sets forth specific maximum limits for K-12 class sizes (for example, K-3 should be limited to fifteen students per teacher).

Restructure Institutional Arrangements

The issue of institutional arrangements, or structural reform is, perhaps, the most visible focus of reform recommendations. Two basic types of restructuring are proposed: school-based (or school site) management and parental and student choice (often referred to as "voucher" proposals).

School-based management may be defined as the process of returning the responsibility for decisions about curriculum, instruction, budget, and personnel to the individual school. It is part of an effort to decentralize the decision-making process and empower those at the local level who are directly affected by the decisions. The Minnesota Business Partnership, the Citizens League (1982), and Public School Incentives all have proposals recommending school-based management. The call for school-based management grows out of "school effectiveness" research. The Minnesota Department of Education (1984) discusses the characteristics of effective schools and has encouraged local districts to apply this research.

Undoubtedly, the most controversial school reform proposals are those allowing students (or their parents) to choose the school they wish to attend and take state aid with them to the school of their choice. These "voucher system" proposals fall into two groups: those that allow choices only among competing public schools and those that expand the choice to private schools, and in some instances private business and community providers, as well.

Into the first group fall the proposals of Governor Perpich, the State Senate's "Access to Excellence" bill, and the DFL group. Perpich recommends that beginning in the 1986-87 school year, students in the eleventh and twelfth grades be allowed to choose which public education program best serves their needs and interests, and by the 1988-89 school year, that all families be able to select the public school their children wish to attend. The Senate's bill proposal places the governor's plan in a legislative context and adds relevant details and cost figures. The DFL group, on the other hand, does not go as far as the governor's proposal or the Senate bill. They recommend establishing a "structural partnership task force" to recommend curricular alternatives to regular

programs for eleventh and twelfth grade students. (It should be noted, however, that the senate members of the DFL group also cosponsored the subsequent "Access to Excellence" bill which appeared the month following the DFL plan.)

Voucher plans that go beyond the public school arena include the Citizens League, the Minnesota Business Partnership, and two legislative proposals. The earliest (and still perhaps the most influential) proposal came from the Citizens League in 1982. They recommend that public education dollars follow parents' choices about which schools (public or private) or educational services should be used. Mention should also be made of the work and influence of St. Paul author and school-reformer Joe Nathan, whose 1983 book Free to Teach outlined a program of parental and student choice. Nathan is working in Minnesota with Public School Incentives and nationally with the National Governors Association to try and achieve school reform. Another influential voice in the restructuring debate is that of Ted Kolderie, project director of the Public Services Redesign Project, who proposes (1984) disengagement from the present hierarchical school system and the creation of incentives (such as parental and student choice of schools) for school improvement.

A bill authored by Representative John Brandl (1983) seeks to establish a program for lower income pupils to select the school they want to attend from among public and nonpublic schools participating in the program. And Senator Florian Chmielewski (1983 and 1985) resubmitted a revised form of his 1983 "Demonstration Educational Grant Act" which proposed creating a demonstration grant program for elementary students who would be allowed a designated amount of money to be spent at a participating public or nonpublic school within a particular district. His 1985 bill, the "Education Choice Act of 1985" proposes a demonstration voucher program operated by a governor-appointed Education Voucher Board and is extended to any Minnesota pupil who is eligible to attend a school (public or nonpublic) in one of up to eight demonstration areas.

Finally, the Minnesota Business Partnership, in their much-publicized recommendation to realign Minnesota's elementary and secondary schools, proposes that eleventh and twelfth grade students be eligible to receive a stipend for two years of state subsidized education from an accredited public or private provider.

In addition to these two basic types of restructuring, there are additional proposals dealing with "model schools" and some other related topics grouped under the subcategory of "educational management" which touch upon the issue of restructuring schools.

The governor's Policy Development Program puts forward several proposals concerning model schools. Model schools are seen as attempts to achieve breakthroughs in learning by restructuring schools through the piloting of innovative practices and new

designs. The Policy Development Program wants to establish regional magnet schools of excellence in priority curricular areas such as math, sciences, foreign languages and the arts. They call specifically for a state school for the arts, a call echoed by Governor Perpich's plan.

The Policy Development Program also proposes the establishment of a progressive education model site that will rely extensively upon technology and will use the entire community as a classroom. The Business Partnership, as part of its emphasis on mastery learning, wants to see mastery learning demonstration schools established and mastery learning institutes created.

Educational management is a subcategory into which several disparate proposals are lumped, and are related only on a very general level. For example, the Business Partnership—again consistent with its emphasis on mastery learning--wants to see the establishment of state administrative mechanisms that will support and administer the change to a restructured mastery learning system. The Governor's Commission proposes additional training opportunities for principals and teachers in management and teaching technologies, while Governor Perpich suggests management assistance programs that will assist local districts in curriculum, staff development, and energy conservation. The Council on Quality Education advocates restructuring the traditional school calendar, while the Governor's Commission wants to maintain the current school day and year without significant increase.

Establish Public-Private Partnerships

Partnership arrangements generally refer to alliances between public schools and private businesses, in which business offers its resources and expertise to the school, and benefits by its ability to influence the kind of knowledge and skills potential employees bring to the workplace.

The DFL group proposes two partnership arrangements: businesses are urged to provide release time for employees serving on school boards and district advisory committees, and a "business incentive matching program" is suggested that would encourage business participation in education. The Governor's Commission has several proposals that would foster business/education partnerships, Minnesota Wellspring encourages more partnership arrangements, and the Minnesota Alliance for Science wants to design an "exchange network" to match teachers who need resources with individuals and groups who want to provide them. The Education Council of the Greater Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce has commissioned a report (Hill and Knowlton 1984) concerned solely with business/education partnerships as a way of improving public education.

The Minnesota Academic Excellence Foundation (1984), although it makes no specific reform proposals, was created to promote academic excellence in public schools through a public-private partnership, by encouraging and stimulating excellence in learning and by publicly recognizing the performance, achievement, and contributions of students, staff, and community members who encourage excellence in learning.

Alter Financial Arrangements

Although nearly all of the reform proposals involve financial arrangements of one sort or another, there are a few specific proposals in which funding is paramount.

The most controversial proposal is Governor Perpich's plan to realign the state-local fiscal system. The governor wants state government to assume responsibility for the 23.5 mill local school levy (basic foundation aid program), offsetting the impact of this on the state budget by transferring responsibility for property tax relief programs to local governments. This amounts to a tradeoff of about $725 million, but there would be no net change in either the state or local funding shares for schools. In effect, the governor's proposal is a clarification and simplification of state-local relationships, but not a major change in financial responsibility.

In addition to this proposal, the governor's Policy Development Program has requested additional funding for the Council on Quality Education's study of alternative educational practices and, in separate proposals, requests funding for "low cost strategies" (such as improving teacher training) and "higher cost strategies" (such as raising teacher salaries).

Finally, the Minnesota Business Partnership suggests the creation of an educational investment fund to defray the cost of the transition to their proposed restructured school system.

Conduct Research and Development

A number of research and development ideas have been proposed, most of which are listed in the preceding categories. However, three more general proposals should be noted.

The DFL group proposes legislative appropriations to fund the research and development projects identified by a statewide task force. The Governor's Commission wants additional funding for research and development in identifying and addressing local needs. The MEA wants teachers to define and identify research needs in public education, with the state funding the research and implementation of the results.

* * * * *

Although not fitting into the more detailed reform proposal format used here, mention should be made of a recently-issued brochure entitled "The 6-M Perspective: Visionary and Workable Criteria for Public Education Policy in Minnesota" (1986), consisting of recommendations jointly adopted by the Minnesota Association of School Administrators, the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals, the Minnesota Education Association, the Minnesota Federation of Teachers, the Minnesota Elementary School Principals Association, and the Minnesota School Boards Association. The 6-M organizations have formed a coalition to "provide positive leadership in directing Minnesota's energies, resources, and talents toward improving public elementary and secondary education."

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The 1985 legislative session engaged in considerable debate over various proposed educational reforms, although in the public eye the debate was dominated by the governor's "access to excellence" proposals. Here is a brief look at some of the legislation passed in the Education Finance Omnibus Bill (1985) during the special session in June. There are three different kinds of changes that will be discussed: "access to excellence" legislation, student learning and testing legislation, and legislation relating to the teaching profession.

Perhaps as a result of the legislature's interest in reform, the basic per pupil foundation aid allowance was increased from $1,475 for the 1984-85 school year to $1,585 (+7.5 percent) for 1985-86, and to $1,690 (+6.6 percent) for 1986-87. This was the first substantial increase in K-12 funding during the 1980s, and was enacted despite the legislature's strong interest in tax and spending limitations. As this publication goes to press, the 1986 legislature is in session and the future of educational funding is again in question.

"Access to Excellence"

The "access to excellence" proposals from Governor Perpich traveled a rocky path through the legislature. At the outset of the 1985 legislative session, the governor's proposals, presented in a January 4th address to the Citizens League, were taken up by the state senate and transformed into a legislative bill (S.F. 666). Included were the "open enrollment" package, local programs and staff development aid, learner outcomes and testing, model programs and schools (minus the proposed state school for the arts), and management assistance for local school districts.

Although the ideas for these proposals were addressed in the final omnibus bill, all that remained of the much promoted "open enrollment" package when the legisation was passed was a provision regarding post-secondary schools educating high school students (the "Post-Secondary Enrollment Options Act"). In addition, the governor's original proposal for a state school for the arts was resurrected in the final bill ("Arts School and Resource Center").

The "Post-Secondary Enrollment Options Act" (Article 5, Section 1) is designed to promote rigorous academic pursuits and to provide a wider variety of options to high school pupils by encouraging and enabling them to enroll full-time or part-time in eligible post-secondary institutions. School districts are required to grant academic credit for courses and programs completed by the students and do not have the authority to approve

or reject a student's participation in the program. However, post-secondary institutions have the authority to set admission standards. Students do not have to pay for tuition, textbooks, materials, or fees. The Department of Education will reimburse the chosen post-secondary institution from the state foundation aid that would have otherwise gone to the school district. However, the districts are guaranteed foundation aid for the time the student spends in the high school classroom. The cost of transporting students to the post-secondary institutions can be reimbursed to pupils demonstrating financial need, based upon guidelines to be developed by the state board of education. $50,000 is appropriated for fiscal year (FY) 1986 for the transportation of pupils attending post-secondary institutions (Article 2, Sec. 15, Subd. 4).

In addition to allocating arts education aid and providing for a comprehensive arts planning program (Article 5, Section 2-5), the access to excellence legislation establishes the "Minnesota School of the Arts and Resource Center" (Article 5, Section 6-9). It establishes a board—consisting of fifteen persons appointed by the governor and approved by the Senate--which will be empowered to care for, manage and control the arts school and resource center. Beginning in the 1985-86 school year, the resource center will offer programs that are directed at improving arts education in elementary and secondary schools. A total of $491,000 is appropriated for FY 1986 and $2,170,000 for FY 1987.

Student Learning and Testing

In the area of student learning and testing, legislation was passed that approved several provisions. The "Mastery Learning Through Individualized Learning Plans Act" (Article 8, Section 38-42) establishes mastery learning programs for grades K-3 in reading through the use of individualized learning plans. Included in this provision is the requirement that the Commissioner of Education designate ten mastery learning demonstration sites by March 15, 1986. A total of $160,000 is appropriated for FY 1986 and $1,290,000 for FY 1987.

Another provision (Article 8, Section 11, Subdivision 3a) requires each school board to establish a process to assure individual pupil mastery in communications and mathematics. Among other requirements, the process must include procedures for implementation in grades K-12 beginning in the 1986-87 school year, and evaluation of progress toward mastery at least once in four grade groups--K-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12.

The Department of Education is directed to develop and maintain sets of model learner expectations for all grade levels in at least the core curriculum areas and these expectations shall be available for district use (Article 8, Section 15, Subdivision 9). In addition, the department shall consult with each of the public post-secondary institutions

and with the Higher Education Coordinating Board in developing model learner expectations for entrance into post-secondary institutions.

Additional tests shall be maintained by the department for at least three grade levels (Article 8, Section 14, Subdivision 5a). These tests shall be designed to measure the progress of individual pupils toward the core curriculum areas of communications, mathematics, science and social studies. The tests are to be available for district use as part of the local assessment program.

The issue of class size is addressed in Article 7, Section 29, in which the Department of Education is directed to conduct a study of the implications of reducing class sizes in grades K-3 to an optimum pupil-teacher ratio. In the following section, the department is directed to study programs designed to meet the developmental needs of young children. Included in this study will be full-day kindergarten, programs for four-year-old children, and child care needs of children ages 4 to 12.

Finally, aid for programs for gifted and talented students (Article 6, Section 5, Subdivision 3) is increased from $19 per student in the 1984-85 school year to the greater of $40 per student or $500 per district in the 1985-86 and subsequent school years. Total state expenditures will amount to $1,282,600 for FY 1986 and $1,395,000 for FY 1987. In addition, the department is directed to study and make recommendations on programs, policies, and planning for gifted and talented students (Article 6, Section 24).

The Teaching Profession

Legislation approved in 1985 that affects teachers may be divided into the areas of testing, evaluation, licensure, and teacher education. In Article 8, Section 46, the Board of Teaching is required to adopt by September 1, 1986 already validated examinations that will measure academic knowledge of new teachers in their field of licensure. Field testing of exams and periodic reports to the legislature are also required. In addition to an examination in their field of licensure, Article 8, Section 21, Subdivision 4 requires beginning teachers who are applying for initial licenses issued after April 4, 1988 (Section 66) to complete an examination of skills in reading, writing, and mathematics.

In the area of evaluation, Article 8, Section 48 requires the Board of Teaching to develop by July 1, 1986 a plan to evaluate the teaching skills of beginning teachers before a continuing license is issued. Also, school districts are encouraged to develop and adopt a written comprehensive plan for excellence in teaching and curriculum (Article 8, Section 23 & 24), as well as to implement programs of excellence in teaching and curriculum including staff development, in-service education, educational effectiveness, and mentor teachers.

The topic of teacher licensure is addressed in Article 7, Section 21 in which the Board of Teaching is allowed to grant provisional two-year teaching licenses in new fields or in fields in which a shortage of licensed teachers exists. Article 8, Section 25 states that districts may enter short-term, limited contracts with classroom teachers that will provide released time during the school day, additional hours in a school day, or additional days or weeks of employment during the summer to offer services that respond to needs specified by the local school board. A selection committee of six members appointed by the board (with three positions reserved for classroom teachers) will be set up to consider and appoint teachers to these limited contracts. Finally, Article 8, Section 3 authorizes the Board of Teaching to allow school districts to hire non-licensed community experts to teach in the public schools on a limited basis.

Teacher education was addressed in several pieces of legislation. The "Research, Planning, and Development Act" (Article 8, Section 26 & 27) requires the Board of Teaching to award at least three grants to public post-secondary institutions to develop exemplary teacher education programs to be conducted jointly with one or more school districts. $150,000 for FY 1986 and $150,000 for FY 1987 are appropriated for the exemplary teacher education programs.

Article 8, Section 43 requires the Higher Education Coordinating Board, in consultation with the Board of Teaching, to publish annual data on the characteristics of students admitted to and graduating from teacher education programs. In addition, in the Higher Education Omnibus Bill (Section 3, Subdivision 2), the HECB is appropriated $75,000 for each fiscal year to appoint a task force on teacher education programs (together with the Board of Teaching). The task force shall study and recommend changes in teacher education programs to meet contemporary and anticipated teaching conditions so that graduates are capable of being effective teachers.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The specific works cited in the catalogue of reform proposals are listed below. The entire collection of books, reports, journals, and newspaper clippings used by our joint project on Minnesota K-12 education is housed in the CURA Resource Collection and is computer-coded by author, year, and subject "key words" for easy access during research. The collection is available for others who may find it useful. A phone call to CURA librarian Peggy Wolfe (612/373-7833) can be used to arrange for access to the collection.

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APPENDIX

The following is a listing and description of the different organizations that were the sources of the reform proposals. After each description an address and phone number are provided for anyone interested in obtaining further information.

State Department of Education

- The Minnesota Council on Quality Education is part of the Department of Education and was established in 1971 by the Minnesota legislature to fund cost-effective innovations developed by school districts. Address: 722 Capitol Square Bldg., 550 Cedar St., St. Paul, MN 55101 (296-5072).
- The Minnesota Executive Branch Policy Development Program originates from the governor's office, but this particular report ("The Role of Public Education...") was undertaken by the educational cultural affairs subcabinet under the leadership of Nan Skelton, Assistant Commissioner of Education. It is one of several reports coming from this subcabinet and was chosen because it makes a number of specific recommendations which appear representative of and include much of what the Department of Education has been working on for the past few years. Address: State Department of Education, Capitol Square Bldg., 550 Cedar St., St. Paul, MN 55101 (Nan Skelton, 296-2414).

Office of the Governor

- Governor Rudy Perpich's "A Speech on Educational Policy to the Citizens League" outlined his "access to excellence" program.
- The Governor's Commission on Education for Economic Growth was appointed in 1984 to study those recommendations for improving education that were presented in the Department of Education's "Action for Excellence" report. Address: c/o N. Bud Grossman, One Gelco Drive, Eden Prairie, MN 55344 (828-2637).

Recognized Education Organizations

- The Minnesota Association of Colleges for Teacher Education represents teacher educators in the public and private colleges and universities in Minnesota. Address: c/o William E. Salesses, Chair, College of St. Thomas, 2115 Summit Ave., St. Paul, MN 55105 (647-5156).

- The Higher Education Coordinating Board was directed by the 1984 Minnesota legislature to submit a report (in cooperation with the Board of Teaching) with recommendations on teacher education in order to guide state policies on teacher education. Address: Suite 400, Capitol Square Bldg., 550 Cedar St., St. Paul, MN 55101 (296-3974).
- The Minnesota Education Association represents the views of a sizable segment of Minnesota teachers and regards the process of education as dependent upon teachers. Address: 41 Sherburne Ave., St. Paul, MN 55103 (227-9541).
- The Minnesota Alliance for Science is a partnership between the public and private sectors and is hosted by the University of Minnesota Vice President for Academic Affairs. It retains ties with the University of Minnesota Institute of Technology and the College of Education. Address: 313 Walter Library, 117 Pleasant St. S.E., Minneapolis, MN 55455 (376-2582).

Private-Sector Groups Involved with Education

- Minnesota Wellspring is a private, nonprofit organization representing an alliance of leaders in labor, business, agriculture, education, and government. Address: 101 Capitol Square Bldg., 550 Cedar St., St. Paul, MN 55101 (296-1755).
- The Minnesota High Technology Council was organized in 1982 to promote a more conducive atmosphere in Minnesota for the formation and growth of technology-intensive industry. Their top priority is to build a high quality education system at all levels. Address: 4900 W. 78th St., Bloomington, MN 55435 (893-3009).
- The Citizens League was founded in 1952 as an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit, educational corporation dedicated to understanding and helping to solve complex public problems within the metropolitan area. Address: 84 S. 6th St., Minneapolis, MN 55402 (338-0791).
- The Minnesota Business Partnership was founded in 1977 to help identify and analyze the state's longer-range economic issues and help set priorities and plans for action. Because the MBP saw the performance of the K-12 education system in Minnesota slipping, they commissioned a major study to be undertaken by Berman, Weiler Associates of Berkeley, California. Address: 2406 IDS Center, Minneapolis, MN 55402 (370-0840).
- Hill and Knowlton, an international public relations and public affairs counseling firm, was commissioned by the Education Council of the Greater Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce to develop a report focusing on business/education

partnerships in the Twin Cities. Address: Marquette Bldg., Minneapolis, MN 55402 (332-8900).

- Public School Incentives is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to working for dramatic improvement in public education. The focus of PSI's efforts is to identify those conditions that create incentives for change and to help secure opportunities for change-minded educators and other community people to design and develop promising ideas for testing and demonstration. Address: 1885 University Ave., St. Paul, MN 55104 (644-7441).

State Legislature

- The DFL group referred to in this catalogue is a shorthand designation for the booklet "Initiatives for Excellence" co-authored by four DFL legislators--Sen. Jim Pehler, Sen. Tom Nelson, Rep. Bob McEachern, and Rep. Ken Nelson. Address: Sen. Pehler's Office, 306 State Capitol, St. Paul, MN 55155 (296-4241).
- Rep. John Brandl submitted a bill entitled, "Minnesota Educational Quality and Equity Act of 1983." Address: 311 State Office Building, St. Paul, MN 55155 (296-4837).
- Sen. Florian Chmielewski submitted a bill entitled the "Demonstration Educational Grant Act of 1983" and then resubmitted a revised form of it entitled the "Education Choice Act of 1985." Address: 328 State Capitol, St. Paul, MN 55155 (296-4182).
- Sen. Tom Nelson and others submitted an "Access to Excellence" bill which was the legislative embodiment of Governor Perpich's own proposals. Address: 301 State Capitol, St. Paul, MN 55155 (296-4871).
- Education Finance Omnibus Bill. This is the large school aids bill passed during the June special session of the legislature and includes the legislation discussed in the legislative update. Address: 301 State Capitol, St. Paul, MN 55155 (296-4871).